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CONT. . . claims the benefit of Japanese Patent Application Nos. 268476/1998, filed September 22, 1998, and 266391/1999, filed September 20, 1999.--

REMARKS

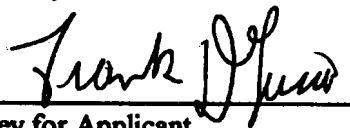
The present Amendment amends the specification to identify International Application No. PCT/JP99/05147, even though the International Application was filed before November 29, 2000 (see MPEP § 201.11).

Applicant submits that no petition or fee is necessary in connection with this Amendment, at least because the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has already recognized that the present application is a 35 U.S.C. § 371 National Stage of International Application No. PCT/JP99/05147 in the Domestic Priority Data section of the official Filing Receipt (copy attached) dated August 20, 2001. For the Examiner's convenience, attached is a copy of the Requirements for Claiming the Benefit of Prior-Filed Applications Under Eighteen-Month Publication of Patent Applications published in the Federal Register on December 28, 2001, with the relevant section of page 67089 highlighted, indicating that no petition or fee is required in situations such as the present one.

The proposed change to the specification is believed to be purely formal in nature and is not believed to require further search and/or consideration regarding patentability. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the Amendment.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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